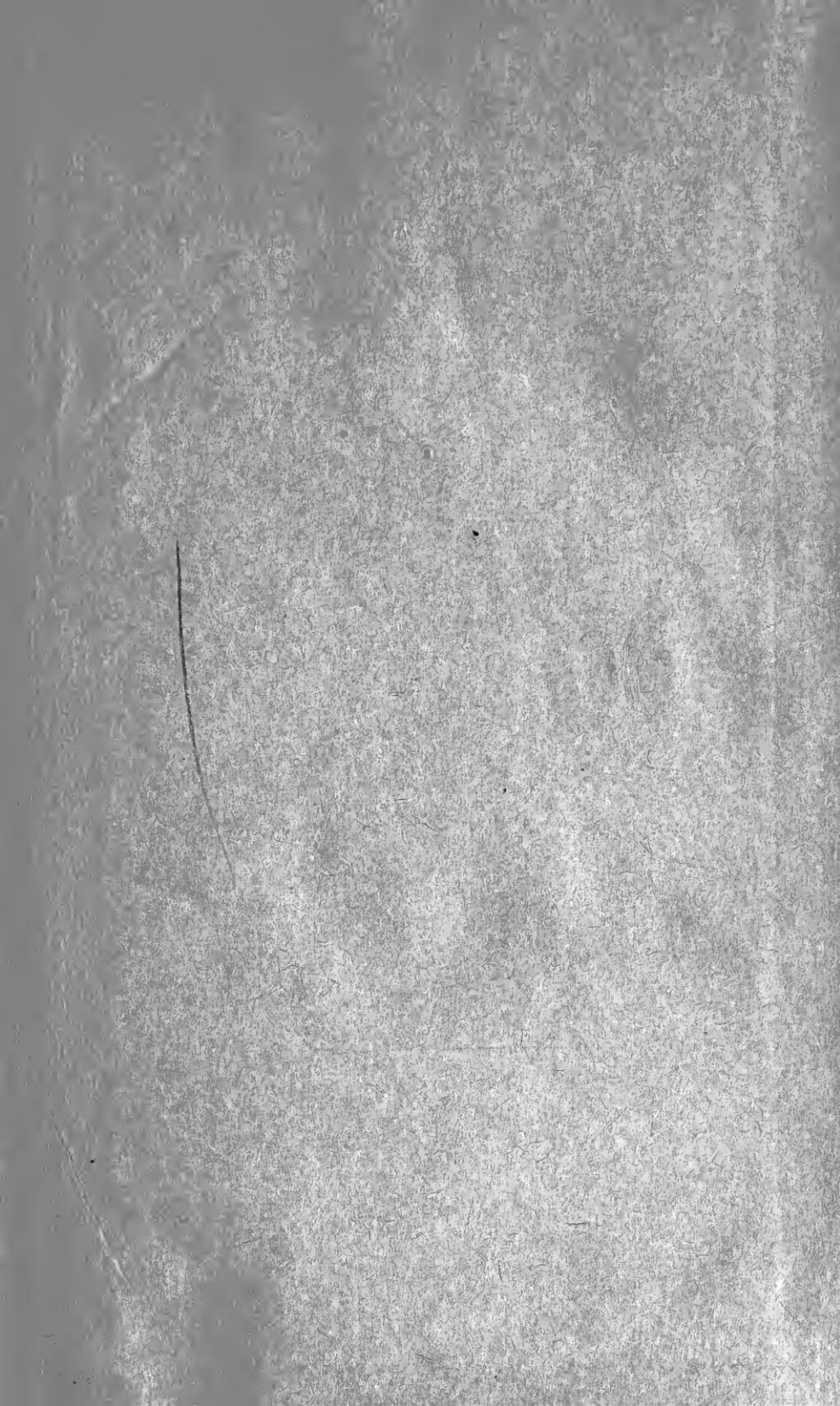




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HISTORICAL DISCOURSE,

ON THE

RISE AND PROGRESS

OF THE

First Congregational Church,

OF

ST. ALBANS, VERMONT,

BY D E A. L. L. D U T C H E R.

Prepared under the direction of the First Congregational Church and Society in St. Albans, and delivered at their Annual Meeting, Jan. 5th, 1860.

ST. ALBANS:

PRINTED BY E. B. WHITING.

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HISTORICAL DISCOURSE.

In the preparation of the discourse, which by the invitation of the Church I am about to read, it has not been forgotten that it is not easy to interest people in the past. The drift of mind at the present day is very decidedly onward towards that which is to come, rather than backward to that which is finished. The men of this generation are far more ready to speculate about that which is to be, than soberly to turn back to that which has been—more anxious to know what the future will unfold, than what the past has taught. But it is certainly befitting and proper, that some regard should be had to the generations that have preceded us, upon whose labors we have entered, and the fruit of which we are now enjoying. Much more than an ordinary regard is due to those to whose pious care and foresight, to whose self-sacrificing zeal and devotion, we owe the early establishment of religious institutions in this country. Their memory we should cherish with the highest veneration

and esteem. It is owing to these and similar reasons, that the attention of many individuals has been of late years directed to the histories of Counties, Towns, Local Churches and the like, and that some of these have been prepared and published, in what have proved to be very interesting volumes. Without any view to publication I have however thought, that some compilation should be made of the facts and circumstances which accompanied the early settlement of this town, and especially such as were connected with the origin and progress of the religious organization, with which we are more immediately concerned.

The town of St. Albans received its first civilized inhabitant in the year 1784. A hardy, intrepid adventurer by the name of Welden, pushing out beyond the farthest barriers of civilization, selected the site of our town as his home, and without a neighbor nearer than Milton, took up his residence here. Other settlers soon fol-

lowed, and by the year 1788, thirty-one were enrolled as liable to taxation. On the 28th day of July, 1788, the town was organized, and selectmen and other officers were appointed. At this time not a Church or School House, Tavern or Store, mill or mechanic shop, was to be found in all this county. Not a road was worked—not a stream spanned by a bridge. Over these hills and these valleys, the dense primeval forest stood in all its solitary grandeur ; unbroken except here and there by a few acres of blackened clearing, surrounding the rude log hut of the settler. The town meetings were held at the house of Mr. Welden which stood upon the north side of the street which bears his name, a few rods west of the buildings of Mr. Houghton. This edifice was built of rough logs and consisted of a single room, with a roof of bark, its windows of paper, and chimney of sticks plastered with clay. The door of this humble cabin was, by vote of the town, made the authorized place for the posting of all legal notices and warnings. No attempt for several years was made either to establish a school or provide in any way for religious worship. The first settlers, like all pioneers of new countries, were busily engaged in providing shelter for their families and in opening and clearing land from which to obtain a subsistence. Once or twice in the year, perhaps, some Missionary penetrated these wilds, stopping for a short time and preaching to such as could be assembled. Rev. Elijah Hedding, since a bishop of the Methodist Church, was the first to do this, and is believed to have performed the first divine service in the town. It was not until the year 1794 that a minister of any denomination resided here permanently. During this year the Rev. Ebenezer Hibbard came in and remained more than two years, teaching a school through the week, and preaching in private houses upon the Sabbath. His

house was situated upon the south side of Nason Street, a short distance east of the Railroad crossing. He was a Congregational minister of very respectable standing, but it is not known that his labors here were productive of any particularly good result. The settlers, it is said, very generally attended his meetings, and considered him a good man and an interesting preacher.

The means of conveyance at that time were extremely limited. Those who lived remote from the place of worship made use of the ox-sled. Around the house where the services were held, were gathered—not the convenient or elegant vehicles which we see in front of our Churches upon the Sabbath now. Teams of quiet and demure looking oxen, attached to sleds—each with its cushion of hay arranged for the comfort of its passengers, stood ranged around gravely awaiting the time for “the meeting to be out.” They came from all quarters of the town. Mr. John H. Burton, at that time an athletic young man, living with his brother, Mr. Nathaniel Burton, at the Bay, was particularly attentive to the meetings, and would drive up Sabbath after Sabbath, a superb ox-team, with a full freight of women and children. Some of his descendants are in the habit of coming here to meeting now, but with a mode of conveyance very much improved.

Mr. Hibbard could have expected but a meagre support from the settlers, most of whom had come into the country with nothing but their hands. The encouragement he received was not satisfactory, and he left town in the year 1796. After this, Missionaries passed through occasionally, some of whom stopped for several weeks. They do not seem to have been very well received. One of them was publicly insulted in the presence of his little congregation, and threatened with a horse-whipping unless he desisted and left the town.

After the county of Franklin was organized, the courts were holden in the hall of the dwelling-house of Judge Hathaway, the very same building now owned and occupied by Mr. Romeo H. Hoyt. Meetings were frequently holden at that place. The celebrated Lorenzo Dow preached there several times, while on missionary tours through this part of the country. One Sabbath day, while he was preaching, Mr. Daniel Ryan, the only merchant in the place, continued to pace the room, flourishing a whip, and several times gave the preacher the lic. Dow at length stopped suddenly in his sermon, fell upon his knees, and offered a short and fervent prayer for the offender, when he went on again,—as if nothing had happened. Mr. Ryan made no further disturbance, and was understood to have said that he had done a very foolish act—for which he felt much ashamed.

The population increased considerably, and in the warning of the town-meeting to be holden in March, 1799, an article was inserted “to see if the town would take any method to have a preacher.” This article was acted upon at the meeting, and it was voted without dissent “to support the gospel.” Joseph Carter, Silas Hathaway and Jonathan Hoyt were appointed a Committee to hire some person to preach as a candidate for settlement. The next record is in May, 1801, when the town voted “to hire a minister to preach the year ensuing.” It was voted “that the salary be raised by a tax upon the Grand List.” A Mr. Dennison preached some portion of the year, and a committee of the town was appointed to settle with and pay him. About this time the first Court-House was built, and it was for those days a fine and commodious building. The meetings, after this was erected, were holden in it, and it continued to be used for all the purposes of a Church, until the year 1828.

Mr. Zephaniah Ross, an illiterate but

well meaning man, who lived something like a hermit life near the summit of Bellevue, held meetings awhile in the Court House, but received very little encouragement. On any pleasant Sabbath during the summer months, the number of men and boys engaged in playing ball upon the green, would exceed that of those who attended poor Mr. Ross’ meeting in the Court House.

In the year 1802, the Rev. Joel Foster came to this town, and remained for some time, preaching to the people upon the Sabbath, and performing the duties appertaining to a Christian Minister. He became quite popular with all classes, and on the 9th of May 1803, it was voted in town meeting, to give him a call to settle as a minister of the Gospel, on a salary of \$500 per annum, to be raised by a tax upon the Grand List. He responded to this in a very neat and appropriate letter, which is spread upon the record book of the town. The matter was dropped and no settlement perfected. It was undoubtedly owing to his efforts, that the Church organization was effected. This took place on the 2d of Jan. 1803. A respectable congregation assembled at the Court-House to testify their interest in the measure, and in their presence, our predecessors in Church relation, nine in number, were constituted by Rev. Mr. Foster, the First Congregational Church in St. Albans. Their names were Samuel Smith, Patience Smith, Paul Brigham, Fanny Brigham, Antipas Brigham, John Hastings, Samuel Sumner, Lucy Farrar and Noah Ripley. Samuel Smith and Paul Brigham, were elected deacons, and Antipas Brigham, Clerk. It is a fact of no ordinary interest that one of this little number still survives. Sister Fanny Brigham, now in her ninety-first year, was a participant in those interesting services, fifty-seven years ago. She has been a witness of the progress of the Church through all its vicissitudes,

a constant attendant upon all its services, until within the past few years, and now, in a quiet and comparatively healthy old age, with mental powers but little impaired, she has lived to witness the ministry of her seventh Pastor, honored and revered by all who know her. The articles of faith upon which the Church was organized, were very brief, and fall far short of a proper declaration of sound doctrinal truth. It was intended so to prepare them, as to unite the different shades of opinion, holden by those who had emigrated from orthodox Congregational and Unitarian communities. They continued in use until the year 1810, when by vote of the Church, they were discarded and the articles now used, were adopted in their stead. The Church had its beginning in great weakness. Its few members lived remote from each other, and for some time but one of them was a resident of the village. Public worship was not maintained regularly for some time.

The character which has been attributed to the people of St. Albans at that day, has always been extremely unfavorable. In addition to the desecration of the Sabbath, which was exhibited every week upon the public square, in the most open and defiant manner, it has been said that many of the leading men of the town, were habitual and shameless gamblers, and that gaming was practiced with little attempt at concealment, even upon the Sabbath—that brutal fights at trainings, raisings, and the like gatherings, were of common occurrence—that intemperance was scarcely regarded as a disgrace: so many being involved in it, and those too, in fair standing in other respects, it attracted but little attention. A great passion for rides, parties, balls and amusements, pervaded all classes, and that in this way, many became unthrifty and bankrupt. It is difficult to reconcile these accounts with the readiness of the people to support the gospel. The affir-

sum of \$500, which they offered Rev. Mr. Foster as his salary, was larger for that time than \$5,000 would be at the present. Certainly when the number of the inhabitants and their limited means are considered, the provision they made for the support of the gospel, was most liberal and praiseworthy, and deserves to be mentioned with the highest commendation. As one reason for this generosity it has been stated, that the land speculators, property holders, and all interested in the growth and prosperity of the town, wanted a Church organized and a Minister settled, because, without these, they could not hold out proper inducements, to the better class of immigrants to settle among them. It was a great object with them, to attract hither men, who had money to pay for land. A town having neither Church or Minister, would be shunned by the substantial and enterprising Massachusetts and Connecticut men, who had been brought up to go to meeting, and these were the men of all others, whom they hoped to secure. Admitting this to be true, it only proves that the men who guided the destinies of St. Albans at that time, displayed great wisdom and forecast, qualities not to be looked for, among a reckless and depraved community. Another reason given, is the former habits of the people in the places from which they emigrated. They felt the want of the Christian Sabbath, with its ministrations and ordinances, such as their fathers had always enjoyed. They found a state of semi-heathenism unbearable, and so were brought to be willing to tax themselves, even heavily, that they might enjoy the comforts and benefits, of Christian civilization. It was more than two years from the time of its organization, before the church succeeded in obtaining a minister whom they could settle as their Pastor. Rev. Jonathan Nye then but twenty-two years of age, responded affirmatively to their call, and was ordain-

ed March 5, 1805. Some objections to the doctrinal views of the candidate, were made in the council while he was under examination. Rev. Mr. Bogue of Georgia, was strongly opposed to his being set over a Congregational Church. A large congregation had assembled at the Court-House to witness the ordination exercises, and waited throughout the day, while the council was deliberating. Rev. Doet. Sanders, President of the college at Burlington, warmly and perseveringly defended Mr. Nye, evincing a determination, that the settlement should be effected, and the ordination exercises proceed. Mr. Bogue yielded his opposition at length, in consideration of the youth and inexperience of the candidate, hoping that further study and intercourse with his elders in the ministry, would improve his theological views. It was not until late in the evening, that the council came to an agreement, but the ordination took place, notwithstanding the lateness of the hour, and the fact that the Congregation was mostly scattered, and gone to their homes. The settlement of a minister gave great satisfaction, not only to the Church, but to the entire community. A new interest was awakened in religious matters, and the morals of the town began speedily to improve. The Sabbath was a different day from what it had been. No crowds of noisy men and boys were seen playing ball on that day. A very orderly and respectable congregation attended upon Mr. Nye's preaching, and were apparently very much attached to their new minister. He was certainly a man of a good deal of promise. Although scarcely past the period of early youth, he maintained great dignity and propriety of deportment, and was a preacher of considerable ability.

The young people were getting up a great ball, and one of the managers waited upon him with a ticket of invitation. He replied that he would attend, if they would

allow him to open the ball. He was assured that nothing would please the company more. He told the manager he thought not, for his way to open the ball would be with prayer. The Church received ten members, during the four years of Mr. Nye's ministry. Their names were Mary Brigham, Patience Hutchins, Salome Wetmore, Mrs. Warner, Relief Parker, Sarah Pomeroy, Jonathan Hoit, Lois Hoit, Willard Howe and Mrs. Howe. Mr. Nye was quite popular as a preacher with the people generally, but not with his Church. They continued to respect him as a man, but deemed him unsound in the faith. They took no measures to bring about a separation, but Mr. Nye in 1809 asked for a dismissal. A council was called which never assembled and he was never regularly dismissed. He took leave of his people however in a farewell sermon from Habakuk III-7, "I saw the tents of Cushan in affliction." In this sermon he inveighed with much pungency against the evils of disunion, and the affliction it is sure to bring, and was supposed to be somewhat severe, in his application to some of the members of the Church. They took it in very good part. One of them Mr. Willard Howe, was enquired of how he liked the sermon? He replied "that he liked it very well indeed; that it was the best sermon he ever heard Mr. Nye preach; it grew better and better to its close, and last word, farewell, was the best of all." The congregation next employed the Rev. Daniel Haskell to preach a few Sabbaths, as a candidate for settlement. He was quite a young man, fresh from his studies, and had but just commenced preaching, as a licentiate. His reputation for piety, sound theological opinions, and high literary attainments, had preceded him, and when it became evident, that he was also an impressive and eloquent preacher, the Church promptly, on the 11th of Feb., 1810, extended to him a call to settle as their Pastor. At this time, there were but five

male members in the Church. The Church in Burlington being destitute of a Pastor, hearing of Mr. Haskell, gave him a call, and the contest was quite spirited as to which of the Churches should have him for their minister. He accepted the call of the Burlington Church, much to the disappointment of the people of St. Albans.—The Rev. Mr. Hazen, late of Berlin in this State, and father of Rev. Allen Hazen, missionary to India, was then engaged to preach six months. The first real prosperity ever enjoyed by the Church, was while under the care of this excellent man. He visited all parts of the town, holding meetings in private houses, and doing much to interest people in religious affairs. The Thursday prayer meeting was established by his instrumentality, and which has continued to be holden ever since. The Church would gladly have settled him as their Pastor, but the society wanted an eloquent and attractive preacher, and Mr. Hazen, although a most estimable man, and very successful in building up the Church and Congregation, lacked some of that outward grace and show, which those who think superficially, look upon as of paramount importance. The accessions to the Church about this time, included quite a number of those, who became its ornaments and pillars, and added decidedly to its influence and usefulness. Among those who united in 1810, were Joseph S. Brainerd, Mrs. Hannah Brainerd, Lumas T. Hoyt, Ira Church, Mrs. Elizabeth Little, and Mrs. Martha Weeks, and in 1811, Orman Tullar, Mrs Persis Tullar, Benjamin Swift, Julius Hoyt Horace Janes, Jonathan Janes Jun., and Mrs. Susanna Stevens. With two exceptions, these have all gone to their reward, having witnessed a good confession, and left behind them the savor of a sainted memory.

In Dec. 1810, the Rev. Wm. Dunlap, a very promising young man, was engaged to preach, and on 5th of March, 1811, received

an unanimous call to settle. He desired time to lay the application before his Presbytery in New Jersey, and on the 25th of April following, apprised the Church that the call was declined. The Congregation were much disappointed at this result, but do not seem to have yielded to despondency. In this as well as in former emergencies, they were greatly aided by the judicious counsel and support, of Rev. Benjamin Wooster, late of Fairfield. His influence contributed very much, to preserve the Church from being led away into dangerous errors. Whenever it was without a Pastor, he treated the people like a portion of his own parish, attended funerals, solemnized marriages, administered the ordinances, and frequently preached on the Sabbath. During the great revival in 1815, he spent several months here, laboring with unwearied diligence in the duties of the ministry. This Church and Society, should hold his memory in the highest respect and veneration. In Nov., 1811, the Rev. Willard Preston, a young licentiate came to Milton on a visit to a sister, and was engaged by the Society to preach six Sabbaths. His very first sermons produced a very favorable impression upon all who heard them, and at the end of the time for which he was engaged, he was unanimously invited by the Church and Society, to become their Pastor and spiritual teacher. He accepted the invitation in a letter which stands upon the record book of the Church, and which is a model for all similar communications. The ordination exercises took place Jan. 8, 1812.

The exercises were interesting, and were attended by what at that time was called a large concourse of people. Mr. Preston entered upon the ministry with zeal and fidelity, and by his eloquence as a preacher, his unaffected piety, and amiable spirit, seemed to attract all hearts.

Seventeen members by profession, and four by letter, were added to the Church

during his first year's ministry, among whom were Abigail Gates, Ruby Morgan, Heman Hoyt, John L. Chandler, Ephraim Little, Timothy Hoyt, and Newton Hays. Two of these it will be seen are with us still.

The excitement and alarm upon this frontier in consequence of the war with Great Britain, was seriously detrimental to the interests of religion at this time, and in the year 1813 only five were admitted to church fellowship, none of whom are now living. In 1814; even were received, among whom were Patience Church, Mary Janes and Mary Whittimore—six in 1815, previous to Mr. Preston's leaving, sister Annis Holyoke the only survivor. The health of Mr. Preston became very much impaired. He attributed this to the severity of our northern winters, and became at last fully of the opinion, that he could not survive another. He accordingly requested a dismission from the pastoral office June 9th, 1815. A council was called and assembled Aug. 2d. After full deliberation the council voted that the relation between him and his people be dissolved, for the reason that, in their opinion, the health of Mr. Preston was such, as to require a suspension of his ministerial labors. He remained in town and preached on the Sabbath until late in September following. Previous to his leaving, an interesting and revived State of feeling was manifest in the congregation. This was apparently deepened and extended by his tender and affectionate farewell sermon. This was published, and a few copies are in existence still. Doct. Preston is remembered with much affection and respect, by most of our older citizens. He visited us and preached to our congregation, about eight years since, as many will recollect. He might not have been one of the greatest of preachers, but he was one of the most amiable of men, was sound in the faith, a firm adherent of the truth, and a most accomplished pulpit orator. Having regained

his health, he was settled over the Congregational Church in Burlington, after which he was for about a year President of the College. He resigned this office and was afterwards the pastor of a large and influential Presbyterian church, at Savannah, in the State of Georgia. His death occurred about three years since. The revival to which allusion has been made, continued with great power through the fall and winter months. The ordinary means of grace alone were used. It was a time of much prayer, and prayer meetings were holden in private houses, and different neighborhoods, almost every evening of the week. Ten Church-meetings for the examination of candidates were holden during the month of December, at each of which, the new converts gave in a relation of their experience. The influence of those meetings upon the revival was very great. A solemnity rested upon the entire community. Every day was like a Sabbath, and the great things of eternity, the chief topic of conversation. On the last Sabbath of 1815, thirty-five persons were admitted—the Rev. Benjamin Wooster officiating as pastor—sixteen of whom were baptised.

Of all those who made a profession of religion upon this occasion, the only one remaining in town and connected with the Church, is sister Rebecca Swift. Six church meetings for prayer and the examination of candidates, were holden during the month of January, 1816. On the 4th February, twenty-eight persons were received as members, Mr. Wooster officiating, seventeen of whom were baptised. Sister Lymna Wead, Cynthia West, and John Gates, are all of that number who remain. April 14th, four were received, of whom brother Lawrence Brainerd is the sole survivor. August 4th, four more one of whom, Mrs. Lydia Newton is still living. Oct. 15th four more, not one of whom is left us. By these several addi-

tions, the Church was greatly strengthened. It attained a position of influence and capacity for good which it has never lost, and but for the dissensions which followed, and which are still to be adverted to, no bounds seemingly, could have been set to its prosperity. It is worthy of notice, that of the members received by the Church as the fruits of this revival, a very few only proved unworthy of their calling. Its influence upon the town was very great nor can it be said to have ceased, even at the present time, forty-seven years since its occurrence. It may be seen even now in the well ordered households of many of the descendants of the converts of that period. After being for nearly a year and a half destitute, the Church and Society voted unanimously a call to the Rev. Henry P. Strong to become their Pastor. He was a minister of experience, and had preached to the congregation very much to their satisfaction, several months before the call was extended. He was installed by a council, called for the purpose January 22d, 1817. The services were solemn and interesting, and great expectations were indulged, of the growth and prosperity of the congregation, under the ministry of their new pastor. The people were in entire concord, they had been refreshed by a work of grace, such as the Church has never witnessed before or since. Not a cloud or a speck even, could be descried upon their horizon. It is perhaps even at this late day, a somewhat delicate task to write the history of the ministry of the Rev. Mr. Strong in St. Albans. I certainly have no reason to be otherwise than impartial, in the little which I shall undertake to say concerning it. Mr. Strong came to St. Albans, with the reputation of a sound and able minister. He was known to be a faithful and an earnest advocate of what the Congregational people of New England consider, the fundamental doctrines of the Christian system. The public expecta-

tion was fully met. His sermons abounded in deep thought and close analytical reasoning, clothed in forcible and impressive language, and his inferences and applications, were brought home with power. He was more than usually impressed with the necessity of setting forth clearly and unmistakably the depravity of our nature, the sovereignty of God and kindred doctrines. This he did with such ability, that many whose hearts rose against them, were unable to reply, and became secretly convinced of their reasonableness and truth. During the year 1817, eleven persons by profession and five by letters united with the Church,—brother James Williams is the only one of this number connected with the Church at present. In 1819 two more were received, which were the last admissions during the pastorate of Mr. Strong. Our Church has always cherished a strict regard for the distinguishing principles of Congregationalism, and it was unfortunate that a suspicion became general, that Mr. Strong did not sympathize with these views, and that he was disposed to manage his parish, after the manner of Presbyterian ministers. Many of the people were disturbed, by his apparent disregard of the former usages of the Church. They thought him unfriendly to the conference meetings, as they had been in the habit of conducting them, inasmuch, as he did not encourage the brethren to exercise their gifts in this direction, but occupied the time with lectures and expositions. When candidates for admission were received into the Church, there was one of the articles of faith, which he persistently refused to read. This was the twelfth article, and reads as follows: "We believe that in all matters that come before the Church which are to be determined by a vote, in those decisions, no brother has a right to claim any superior control, but the pastor and each member, in point of power are perfectly equal."

The church may have been unreasonably jealous, but it would seem, that had Mr. Strong been judicious and conciliatory in his treatment of them, their suspicions might have been quieted. But he was a bold, strong willed man, and when he thought himself right, he turned neither to the right hand or the left, to explain any thing, or satisfy anybody. The next to disturb and still more to complicate the difficulties which were gathering, were certain matters of a business character in which Mr. Strong became engaged. He had quite a taste for agricultural pursuits, and for a professional man, was engaged to a considerable extent, in the cultivation of land. He did this, toiling with his own hands, to meet as he believed to be necessary, the expenses of a rapidly increasing family, and would sometimes come direct from the labors of the farm and with the dust of the field upon his clothes and person, to the preparatory lecture, or the Church-meeting. He had come from a quarter of the country, where unusual attention was paid to agricultural improvement, and to the introduction of new and better breeds of the domestic animals.

On coming to Vermont, and perceiving the apathy which prevailed among our farmers, clergyman though he was, he felt called upon to attempt a reform. At considerable expense he imported some valuable animals, but gained by it the public impression, that he was a money-loving, worldly-minded man. This was bruited about industriously by the enemies of the Church, and very seriously impaired his influence and usefulness. The salary which the society agreed to pay him was \$800, a sum much larger than his predecessors had at any time received. At the close of the war when he was settled, the country was prosperous and the salary was raised with little difficulty, but not long afterwards the prices of agricultural products

fell off very largely, and money became exceedingly scarce. This, with the growing unpopularity of Mr. Strong, made it impossible for the Society to collect the salary. Mr. Strong, on his settlement, required a bond with good and sufficient security that the salary should be paid. This was prepared and subscribed to by fifteen of the more active and liberal men of the Church. When by reason of deaths, failures and removals, the subscribers to the bond found a large amount of arrearages annually accumulating, they sought earnestly to be released. For some time Mr. Strong refused to offer any terms upon which the bond should be cancelled. But after much angry disputation, and several attempts by the Church and Society to arrange the matter, he offered, that if he were paid all the arrearages then due, he would ask for a dismission. With this proposition the subscribers closed. A mutual council assembled Oct. 3d, 1821. They were very severe upon the opposition to Mr. Strong in their result, and say 'that those members of the church who are implicated in the charge, ought to humble themselves before God, and to confess their sins unto their brethren.' Mr. Strong was dismissed with high commendation and removed to the town of Phelps, N. Y., where he was settled over a Presbyterian Church until his death. The dissensions in the congregation had been of so long continuance and of such rancorous character, that great doubts were entertained whether the adverse parties could ever be brought to act together, with even a decent show of union. Angry feelings had been excited, and even in the Church meetings, the brethren forgot what was due to each other and to the sacredness of the place, and were betrayed into the use of bitter and acrimonious language, greatly to the prejudice of the cause of religion, and inconsistent with their Christian profession. The Rev. Dr. Smith in a sermon upon

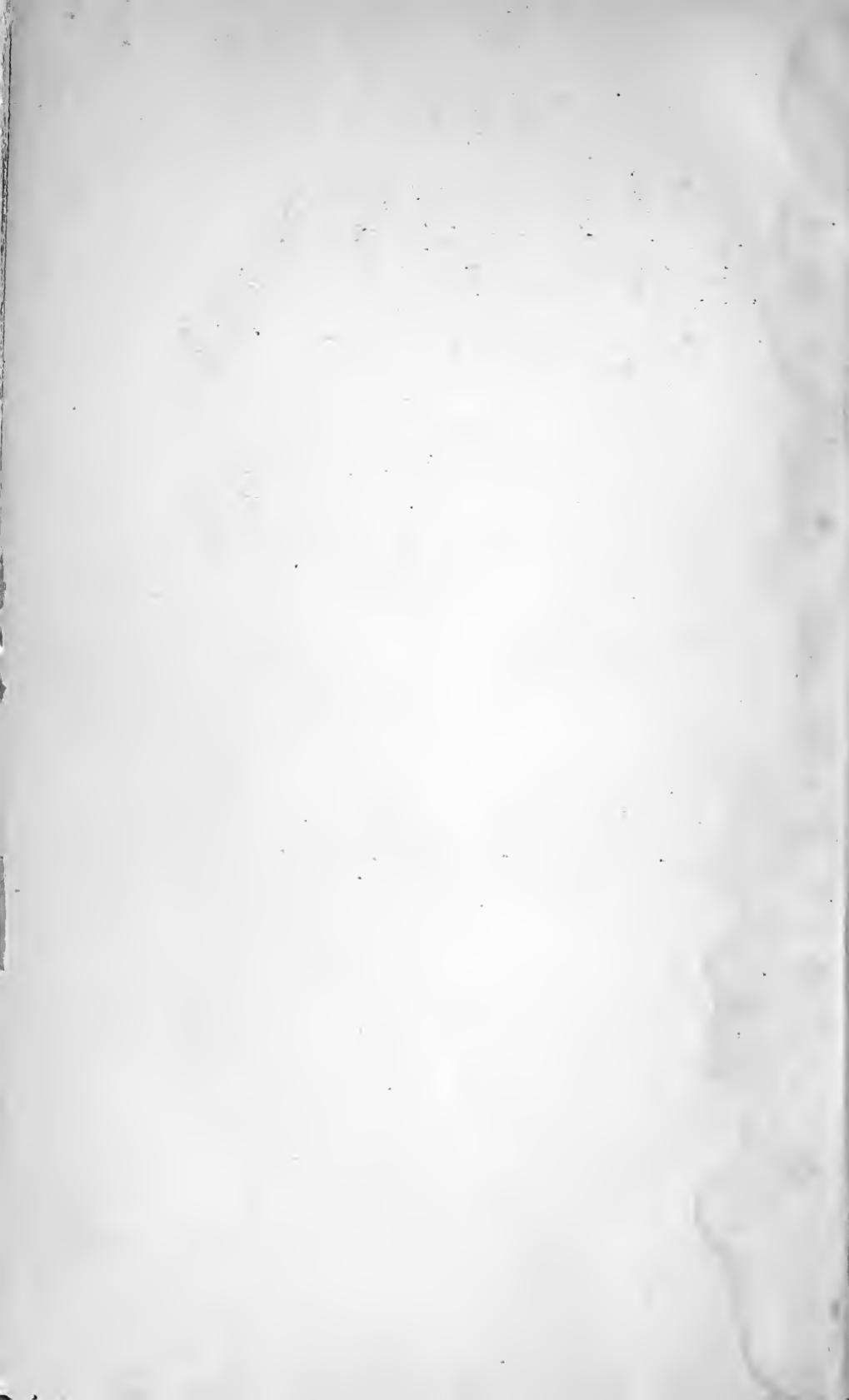
New Years day, 1826, thus alluded to the troubles of these times :—"Ah ! my brethren, the records of your Church tell me of a cloud which in former times hung over this Zion, dark and threatening as the midnight storm—and in that day of trouble and rebuke, ties were broken and hearts sundered, which I fear have not since been united." The Church seemed to be effectually humbled. They were like mariners who had barely escaped shipwreck. Mutual acknowledgements and confessions were made, confidence was in a measure re-established, and peace restored. So fully impressed with the dreadful evils, of divisions and dissensions were the members of the church at that time, they have left on record a solemn warning to all who should come after them. On the 8th of June, 1822, the Church, including its male and female members, solemnly and publicly adopted certain rules of christian and ministerial fellowship and discipline, the importance of which they state they have now thoroughly learned, by a painful series of afflictions and dissensions, which had existed for some two or three years—and which had caused the suspension of the New Testament passover for the last of these years. That these difficulties being now happily composed, a detail of their rise and progress could be of no more service. They solemnly pledged themselves anew, to be kindly affectioned one towards

another, and to endeavor to walk in the primitive and apostolical simplicity of the gospel. They requested the Moderator to enter this paper at length in the record book of the Church, for the benefit of those who were then members, and for their successors, as an out-line directory for them and their children, as a sacred memorial and pledge of their christian fellowship and discipline—as also of their renewal of their covenant and professional vows as followers of them who through faith and patience inherit the promises.

* * * * *

Rev. Worthington Smith was ordained June 4th 1823—dismissed Dec. 11, 1849. Addition by profession 145, by letter 106, total 251. Rev. Ebenezer Cutler, was ordained March 6th 1850—dismissed July 10, 1855. Additions by profession 10, by letter, 27, total 37. While the church was without a pastor, 6 by profession and 12 by letter were received. Rev. David Dobie was installed Oct. 1, 1856—died Feb. 18, 1857; 3 by profession, and one by letter received. The present pastor, Rev. J. E. Rankin, preached his first sermon here March 8th 1857, and was installed June 24th—since which time 61 by profession, and 31 by letters, in all 92 have been received. Total number of members received since the organization of the Church, 591. Present number, 190.









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